



**MINUTES**  
**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL GOAL SETTING MEETING**  
**February 26, 2019**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 5:07 pm.

**Present:** Mayor: Charlie Miner; Council: Deirdre Kvale, Michelle Jerde, and Jahn Dyvik

**Staff Present:** City Administrator: Scott Weske; Public Works Director: Sean Diercks; and City Clerk: Jeanette Moeller

**Others Present:** Park Board Members: Donny Chillstrom (Chair); Planning Commission Members: Roger Adams (Chair), John Hughes, and Anita Secord; EDA Resident Members: Tim Hultmann

**Absent:** Council: Tom Skjaret (with prior notice)

**APPROVE AGENDA**

*A motion was made by Dyvik, seconded by Jerde, to approve the Agenda as presented. Ayes: all.*

**RECEIVE INPUT ON ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS FROM BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

**Receive Input From: Park Board**

Park Board Chair Chillstrom noted the Park Board had met the previous evening and welcomed new member, Suzanne Caswell. Chair Chillstrom observed he was aware of some discussion concerning the functionality, relevance and purpose of the Board. With that in mind, the Board committed to streamline their meeting process and intends to hold meetings on a bimonthly basis during 2019 with agenda items to focus Board attention on specific proposals as well as seeking funding/grant opportunities for park improvements. He explained that the Board is aware they work within limited budgetary means.

Chair Chillstrom shared park related project ideas and work items in dialogue with the Council, and the group identified the following as priorities or main areas of interest:

Consider the addition of a fourth full-time Public Works employee to allow for bringing lawn mowing and maintenance in-house.

Construction of a shelter in Dexter Park by Public Works once Eureka Construction has met their contractual obligation to install a concrete pad in the park. The shelter would be similar to the structure constructed by Public Works in Hardin Park.

Installation of a water fountain in Dexter Park.

Trail improvements including upgrading the gravel trail at Holbrook Park and installing a paved asphalt trail to connect to Willow Drive.

Explore the addition of an archery range amenity at Holbrook Park.

Work towards achieving funding, labor or volunteers, and agency permissions as needed for repairs to the Nelson Lakeside Park fishing pier and to the split rail fencing throughout the park. Consider upgrading park lights to LED lighting.

Review funding sources and plan for the replacement of playground equipment in Dexter Park.

Recruit volunteers to establish a gardening club to help maintain landscaping and flower baskets along the Wayzata Boulevard W corridor as well as in City parks. During discussion of this item, Planning Commission member Anita Secord volunteered to be a point person for organizing a garden club and described her previous affiliations with Boy Scout groups and local service projects as potentially being an asset to her participation in this effort. Council member Dyvik indicated he would invite Commissioner Secord to the next CR 112 Landscaping Subcommittee meeting to begin discussion of establishing a gardening club.

Consider using boulders excavated by Eureka Construction during the Wayzata Boulevard W construction project for placement along the hillside from Hardin Park down to the trail to add a natural play amenity.

It was noted that in the past year, the City entered into an agreement with the Orono Baseball Association to expand and enhance their use of the Holbrook Park warming house and concession stand area. Orono Baseball is now exploring applying for a grant opportunity to permit the addition a batting cage facility to the park, recognizing that permanent improvements would become City park property.

Council member Dyvik recalled there had been discussion of adding a butterfly sanctuary area as well. Plantings along Wurzer Trail may provide opportunity to accomplish this.

Weske explained that the Park Board has a fund as a line item within the General Fund budget allocating \$36,000 for park related improvements at this time. Park dedication funds received through approved development applications would also be allocated for Park Board projects.

### **Receive Input From: Planning Commission**

Planning Commission Chair Adams reviewed work completed by the Commission in 2018, including a thorough review of the City's zoning districts to explore the feasibility of simplifying zoning through reducing the number of districts. Upon their detailed review, recognizing that zoning districts were added over a long period of time to organically respond to neighborhood needs/requests for lot size standards, the Commission determined that the only way to compress the number of residential districts would be to either work from the largest lot size as a minimum lot standard, thereby rendering smaller lots to be non-conforming; or to establish the smallest lot size as the minimum lot size standard, which would result in permitting a number of lots to be subdivided. Ultimately the Commission came to the conclusion that it would be inadvisable to combine districts for simplification, but there may be opportunity for some "cleanup" and "tightening" of language within the individual district code sections.

The Commission currently agrees that two primary areas of immediate work would be:

Updating of the Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning section. The PUD zoning classification is intended to create the ability for a developer to have some flexibility and to address items typically requiring variances; however, the current PUD section needs review and updating in a number of areas.

Review of the B-2A Service Business District zoning code section to determine where updates may be warranted.

Mayor Miner commented that the Planning Commission will be very busy with land use applications coming their way in the months ahead. It was his understanding that review of the PUD zoning text is already in motion, and he was supportive of completing that goal this year. He appreciated the Commission's readiness and willingness to take on the applications soon to be coming the City's way.

Administrator Weske complimented Chair Adams on doing a great job keeping the last Commission meeting on task during review of a complex application, and gave thanks to Chair Adams and the Commission for their work.

### **Receive Input From: Economic Development Authority (EDA)**

Council member and EDA Chair Dyvik noted that while he had not really solicited any specific goal input at the EDA's last meeting, he believed members would agree with the following work items:

With the purchase of the former BP station complete, address action to remove structures from and level the site thereby approving appearance immediately. Explore best options for the site while considering what soil remediation may be necessary. Recognize that grant opportunities are available to potentially assist in funding a soil remediation project. Planning Commission Chair Adams suggested the site be posted with "no trailer parking" signage. The City had intended to limit how many boats can be trailered in to use Long Lake through limiting the number of boat and trailer parking spaces available at the Nelson Lakeside Park launch; however, boaters continue to try and park in the Lakeside Wine & Spirits and former BP station parking lots. Mayor Miner stated that Administrator Weske will be working on bringing forward proposals for removing structures from the property at a future EDA meeting. Council members discussed past estimates received for leveling the site, a party potentially interested in redeveloping the property, potential uses for the site, and assuring that once leveled the parking lot drains correctly.

Continue to work towards resolution of utilizing/selling a portion of the land behind the Public Works building, addressing the "public use" requirement imposed by MnDOT upon the purchase of the site. Administrator Weske explained that the City had submitted the purchase price for the landlocked parcel; however, MnDOT is firm that if they complete the sale of the land to the City, the property may only be used for public purpose. The contract for the sale of the property did not disclose the public use requirement. If the public use requirement can be resolved, Mr. Hendrickson continues to be interested in purchasing the portion of the property behind his building from the City, and funds from his purchase would be allocated back to the EDA. Weske and the City Attorney are continuing to work on this matter further.

Council member Dyvik noted that a previous City goal had been, "EDA to work towards selecting a developer for the City-owned Virginia Avenue property, giving consideration to the concerns of the Virginia Avenue residential neighbors throughout the process. Pursue sale of Virginia Avenue property to qualified developer." He recommended that this goal remain a current one. Park Board Chair Chillstrom stated that he had revised his position from his previous time as Mayor and on Council regarding the property, and now supports residential density for the site to help support the community's downtown. Commission Chair Adams added he too believes the Virginia Avenue site would be a good place for density within walking distance to the downtown. Council members discussed various development projects recently approved by Orono in the vicinity of the boundary between the cities. Council member Kvale noted that individuals she'd spoken to supported keeping the Virginia Avenue property a green space and establishing a public purpose for it.

Another EDA goal would be submit a proposal for another Business District Initiative Grant in support of helping the business district thrive during continued construction. In particular, Council member Dyvik commented that there is a category under the grant terms for enhancements to a business district, which could include banners, flowers, signage, and items for the beautification of the downtown district.

Also, Council member Dyvik suggested the EDA consider opportunities for acquisition of more MnDOT properties.

Weske noted that the EDA does have the taxing authority to bring in revenue from the City's tax base in order to implement a revolving loan fund and issue short term grants to help businesses that may need gap financing for projects such as façade upgrades.

Mayor Miner suggested that there be discussion of changing the structure of the EDA towards a structure that did not include the full Council all as members. Staff reviewed the history of the EDA's previous membership structure in recent years. It was noted that it would be nice if the structure of the Board allowed for a business owner to be a representative as well.

Council member Dyvik invited EDA resident member Hultmann to share any thoughts. EDA member Hultmann voiced support for taking advantage of grant opportunities to support businesses. He also supported adding residential density, particularly for the Virginia Avenue site.

Council member Kvale voiced her objection to the use of the Virginia Avenue property as a site for residential density, stating that to destroy the greenspace and put up an apartment building would be a shame.

#### **CITY COUNCIL GOAL SETTING – REVIEW AND DISCUSS ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS**

Mayor, Council and staff discussed the following goals and work items, incorporating written comments submitted by Council member Skjaret as well:

Replacing split rail fencing in Nelson Lakeside Park.

Installing a picnic shelter in Dexter Park.

Consider installing more GaGa Pits and park amenities such as natural boulder features.

Explore options for replacing Dexter Park playground equipment as well as potentially refinishing playground equipment.

Recognizing that development of new park and trail facilities is difficult for a community now fully developed and with limited funds available for park improvements, revisit and redevelop purpose and projects for the City's Park Board. Anticipated development projects may help contribute to funding available for park projects and enhancements. In addition to other park enhancements discussed at the meeting, the idea of tasking the Board with designing a soccer field for Dexter Park was suggested.

Continuing implementation of the City's goose management program to address the ongoing goose population issue at Nelson Lakeside Park.

Work to establish wage compensation and attract rink attendant staff for the Holbrook Park warming house to assure the facility is staffed during the next winter skating season. Explore opportunity to

partner with Orono Youth Hockey for rink usage, potentially including an exchange of rink use for staffing assistance.

Research and consider alternatives to improve upon current flooding system for Holbrook Park rink facilities. Consider adding a seasonal temporary rink on Long Lake adjacent to Nelson Lakeside Park.

Recruit and hire a fourth Public Works Department full-time employee in order to prepare for succession planning and retirements. If the additional Public Works employee is hired, consider purchase of mowing equipment in order for Public Works to conduct lawn maintenance service rather than contracting the service out annually. Public Works Director Diercks voiced support for this goal, admitting that he had been finding himself stretched thin trying to complete his administrative duties while plowing snow with more and more maintenance tasks being added to the Department's workload of late. Additionally, the increasing workload is making it difficult for employees to be able to use their vacation hours. While the morale of the Department continues to be positive, it would be good to hire a fourth staff member to learn from long-time staff before any retirements occur. The new hire could be more entry level to start and would not have to possess full water/sewer certifications. A job title, wage range, and position description would need to be established with the Council's support.

Complete installation of pedestrian crossing signals at Wurzer Trail and at Heather Lane.

Install benches where safe to do so along the lakeside trail.

Complete grading of Wurzer Trail ditch, and landscape the trail area with sustainable/prairie style plantings.

Consider feasibility of installing new light fixtures in Nelson Lakeside Park to match new light poles throughout the City's downtown area.

Revise and resume a City pavement management plan, taking into account condition of streets as well as the condition of utility infrastructure below the surface as the pavement management plan is updated. Consider seal coating newer streets as needed rather than allocating \$50,000 annually towards seal coating projects. Evaluate funding sources for street and infrastructure improvements, exploring loan opportunities for small cities as well as using LGA in the event LGA funding is restored. Weske explained that the earliest a road reconstruction project could take place would likely be 2020, as there are a number of steps that must be followed in the planning and implementation of a street reconstruction project as set forth in statute.

Continue pursuing replacement of a Public Works pickup truck and the acquisition of a bucket truck.

Consider switching to LED lighting for the Public Works shop.

Beginning in spring, review outdated equipment and items in storage at the Public Works shop and set aside unnecessary inventory to be auctioned off.

Work on updating the City's Employee Handbook to include Family Medical Leave Act changes, social media and internet usage policies, and other appropriate updates. Weske emphasized the importance of beginning this work as a staff to assure that long-time employees do not feel alienated by any changes relative to accrual of leave and other benefits, recognizing that the Council would need to approve any updated handbook document.

Consider engaging WSB more frequently for code enforcement activities, recognizing that code enforcement is conducted on a complaint basis at this time to assure enforcement is conducted in an equitable fashion. City Clerk Moeller noted that if it came to a choice between spending funds on code enforcement versus spending funds on a thorough update of the complete Zoning Code, she would advocate for spending on a complete Zoning Code update recognizing that not only are updates needed, but that Zoning Code is largely the foundation upon which code enforcement takes place.

Continue to maintain awareness of expense on consultant fees.

Respond to resident concerns and work to address use of Glenmoor Lane on street parking by Birch's on the Lake restaurant patrons. Mayor Miner noted that he would like for himself, Council member Skjaret (who resides on the street), and Administrator Weske to meet with Birch's and open conversation on the matter. He observed that Birch's patrons had been noticed parking on street on Glenmoor Lane while parking spaces were open and available in Birch's own parking lot. In addition to the negative experiences of the street's residents, safety of restaurant patrons crossing Wayzata Boulevard W, particularly in the dark, is a concern.

Selection of a solution and/or developer for the Virginia Avenue property remains a current goal of the Council.

Support improvements to the water quality of Long Lake, and continue to support the work of the Long Lake Waters Association (LLWA) as they move forward with a carp harvest and advocate for improving water quality in the Long Lake Subwatershed through action and education. Council member Dyvik spoke favorably of the impressive efforts of the LLWA and its committed board members, noting he would like to see the Council in future consider allocating a budgeted amount annually in support of the LLWA's research and activities. Weske added that the Surface Water Management Fund would be an excellent source for contributing funds to the LLWA. Diercks pointed out that a financial commitment to water quality improvements would be considered very favorable to Metropolitan Council for the purpose of stormwater management planning and reporting.

Complete requirements and additional updates needed for submission of the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan to Metropolitan Council.

Implement City long range financial planning.

Work on updating the City Code of Ordinances, a separate document from Zoning Code, to be reflective of ordinances adopted since codification.

Implement online bill paying capability for City utility bills.

Coinciding with the Employee Handbook update, revise the employee performance appraisal process to include an in-writing evaluation form, with Council having opportunity to provide feedback on performance appraisals where appropriate.

Implement "reduce speed" signage along Grand Avenue, similar to signage installed on Watertown Road during the roadway's recent reconstruction. It may be advisable to incorporate "reduce speed" signage for Grand Avenue as part of a street reconstruction project for the road.

Continue to work with the Cities of Orono and Medina to negotiate an updated fire service contract. Recognize that certain demands have been made in writing by the City of Orono, and contract

negotiations will entail considering a number of options and scenarios ranging from re-evaluating contract formulas to Orono potentially going in a separate direction from Long Lake Fire subject to the terms of the current contract.

Evaluate/renegeotiate T-Mobile contractual terms for the wireless carrier's use of the water tower as an equipment site. T-Mobile is seeking to add equipment to the tower which is not covered by the existing contract terms.

Council member Jerde thanked staff for their ongoing work and service. She noted the importance of continuing to post the City Goals List on the City's website.

**ADJOURN**

*Hearing no objection, Mayor Miner adjourned the meeting by general consent at 7:57 pm.*

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Moeller  
City Clerk